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SUBJECT: TURKEY WELCOMES U.S. ASSISTANCE FOR
ENVIRONMENT RELATED EU ACCESSION INVESTMENTS.

11. Summary. Faced with massive financial and implementation challenges in meeting EU environmental standards, Turkey is interested in working with the U.S. Government and private sector in key environmental areas such as medical waste, municipal solid waste, air quality monitoring, wastewater treatment and manure disposal from farms. This could offer opportunities for enhanced government to government cooperation, as well as for the U.S. private sector. End Summary.

12. Talking about EU accession environmental requirements in a July meeting, Ministry of Environment and Forestry Deputy Undersecretary Prof. Dr. Mustafa Ozturk told EconOff, CAO and Scientific Affairs Specialist that in order to meet EU environmental standards Turkey needs institutional capacity building and projects especially in the areas of medical waste, municipal solid waste, air quality monitoring, wastewater treatment and manure disposal from farms. He estimated that 40-60 billion euros will be spent over the coming 20 years in these sectors to comply with EU acquis.

13. Ozturk implied that - although they are working with EU specialists - Turkish organizations would generally prefer to work on technical issues with EPA and other U.S. environmental organizations. He suggested organizing joint seminars and workshops in the areas mentioned above with an eye to identifying opportunities for more focused U.S.-Turkey cooperation on environmental issues. He promised to send a letter to the Embassy specifying areas of possible cooperation as a follow-up to that conversation. Note: Embassy has not received the letter, but will follow up with the GOT. End Note.

14. A recent analysis of gaps in Turkey's domestic environmental legislation and administrative capabilities, carried out by European Commission officials identified a long list of deficiencies in water quality, air quality, waste management, nature protection, industrial pollution, noise, chemicals, and GMOs. A recent World Bank report estimated the total cost for environmental investment for accession at between 28-49 billion euros, or 1-2.5% of GDP of Turkey per year for the 17 years. Current annual investment in the environment sector is estimated at 0.5% of GDP, around \$1 billion. EU environment acquis are - in general - prescriptive on standards, but flexible on how to meet them, giving the GOT flexibility to be open to international cooperation with non-EU countries.

15. In addition to financial assistance from the EU, funding for this spending will come from a variety of sources, including the GOT, the municipalities, state enterprises and the private sector. Experience with recent EU member states during their period of pre-accession reveals that external funds from the EC would likely provide only 25-30% of the state spending needs.

16. Comment: As in many areas of the potential EU accession, Turkey faces difficult and costly challenges in the environment chapter. Turkey is perceived as generally weak on regulation and monitoring of pollution, waste water treatment, and solid waste disposal. Embassy engaged a science fellow three years ago to work on the national sustainable development report for the Johannesburg WWSN Summit. In addition to the ideas suggested above, there may be room for another fellow position to work on road-maps for regulation, monitoring, and compliance in the environmental sector and related to the EU process. End comment.

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